

Octob. 20. 1693.

Imprimatur,

Geo. Oxenden, Procan,

Jo. Beaumont, S. Th. Pr.

Jo. Mountagu, Coll. Trin. Magister.

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A
SERMON

Preached at

Great S^t M A R I E 'S Church

I N

CAMBRIDGE,

Before the Right Honourable

The Lord Chief-Justice H O L T,

A T T H E

A S S I Z E S

Held there, *August* 1. 1693.

By THO. WALKER B. D. Fellow of *Sidney-Sussex* Coll.

Μισῶ πολίτην, ὅστις ὠφελεῖν πάντας
Βραδὺς πίψκει, μάλα δὲ γὰρ βλάπτει ταχὺς,
Καὶ πόλεμον αὐτῷ, τῇ πόλει δ' ἀμείχθμον.
Aristoph. Βατραχ.

C A M B R I D G E,
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MEMORANDUM

CAMBRIDGE

ASSISTANT



To the Right Honourable
S^r J O H N H O L T,
Lord Chief-Justice
OF THE
KING'S BENCH,

And One of Their
MAJESTIES
Most Honourable
PRIVY COUNCIL.

My LORD,



When I lately had the Honour and Happiness of waiting upon Your Lordship, You were pleas'd to Encourage the Publication

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The Epistle Dedicatory.

tion of this Discourse, in such Oblig-
ing Terms, as I cannot here, in Mo-
desty, relate. Your Lordship's Repeated
Requests, which to me are Equivalent
to Commands, and Your Generous Pro-
ffer of giving these Papers Protection,
being such Powerfull Arguments to me,
as I could not in Duty withstand, have
usher'd them into the Publick Light.
This is a sufficient Apology to excuse me
from Arrogance and Presumption, if
there had been no other Reason for my
appearing in Print. But whilst I was
in the Country, I was not only surpriz'd
with a Letter sent me by an Unknown
Hand, misrepresenting my Sermon; but
soon after I came to the College, I was
Allarm'd with the Noise which some
Men had made about it, and not a little
Concern'd at the Invidious misconstructions
which they had put upon it. And therefore
as

The Epistle Dedicatory.

as well in my own Vindication, as in Obedience to Your Lordship's Command, I submit it to a more Publick Censure than it has already undergone. All Men, who are Just and Impartial, have so High a Value for Your Lordship's Judgement, and so Great an Opinion of Your Candour and Integrity, that seeing Your Lordship has been pleas'd to cast a Favourable Aspect upon this Discourse, it raises some hopes in me, that how contemptible soever it may seem in the Eyes of some Persons; yet it may meet with a Candid Reception amongst others, of Your Lordship's Character, who are Hearty Lovers of the Church of England, of their Majesties, and this Nation. As for those who are not, as I neither expect their Favour, so neither do I much regard their Displeasure. If any are offended with my Sermon, it is their own fault and not mine. I am
per-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

perswaded no Honest Man will Vindicate
the Characters of those whom I undertake
to expose. As I have said nothing but
what I really believe to be true, so I hope
my Sincerity may Atone for the meanness
of my Performance; and Your Lordship's
Kind Acceptance of it, will, in my Esteem,
overballance the Sleights and Reproaches
of those who vilifie and condemn it. May
your Lordship live many Happy Years, to
Adorn the Station You deservedly Possess,
to do Justice, and Promote the Publick
Good; and, after You have long been a
Blessing to the Kingdom, may You be re-
cerv'd into that of Eternal Glory, which is
the Unfeigned Prayer of

My LORD,

Your Humble

Most Obedient, Obliged, and

Very Humble Servant,

THO. WALKER.



Prov. xii. V. 26.

*The Righteous is more Excellent than
his Neighbour.*



THAT there is a real Distinction between Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice, which was so antecedently to all positive Laws, whether Human or Divine: and that the natural Deformity, and innate Turpitude of the one, and the amiable Agreeableness and inherent Rectitude of the other do not barely depend upon the arbitrary Sanctions of those who have enacted Laws concerning them, is a Truth so obvious, and manifest to any one, who duly considers the Nature of things, and soberly attends to the reasonings and reflections of his own Mind; that one may justly admire how it comes to pass, that the dull and exploded Notions of ^a *Aristippus*, ^b *C Carneades* and other Philosophers of old, concerning these matters, should be again, with Confidence enough, reviv'd, (especially in this Thinking and Philosophical Age) by Mr. *Hobbs* and his Followers, who pretend to a more than ordinary smartness and sagacity in Reasoning and Speculation. Thus He, who whilst he lived was the Greatest wonder of the *Peak*, in the Preface to his Book *de Cive*, l. 5. de *Justitia*

B

huggs

hugs, and applauds himself for having found out the great and infallible Medicine for Wounded Consciences and troubled Minds: by dispelling those mists of Error, as he calls them, in which Men, before this *Phosphorus* arose, were involv'd, concerning Just and Unjust, Good and Evil: in having clearly demonstrated, by solid Reasons, as he vainly insinuates, that there are no Doctrines Authentick concerning them, beside the Laws and Constitutions of each particular City: (And in his Book *de Corpore Politico*, he boldly, and in plain terms asserts, that *Fus & Utile* right and profit is the same thing. So that, according to this Doctrine, if it should happen, that two or more Cities or Nations should have contrary Apprehensions, and different Sentiments concerning Good and Evil: Just and Unjust, that then these Creatures of Civil Power must submit to new Names, and change their Liveries as often as they change their Masters. But I can never believe, that theft and cruelty, injustice and oppression, deceit and treachery should become good and laudable Qualities, by what Laws soever they were enacted, or by what Authority soever they should be confirmed: or that, amongst Wise and sober Men, they should be reputed more excellent and praise-worthy than Honesty and Clemency, than Justice and Integrity, than Sincerity and Fair Dealing in all the mutual transactions of our Affairs. Certainly the Foundations upon which the laws and principles of Justice and Equity are built, are as unchangeable and immovable as the Will of God, whereby he establishes the immutable Decrees of his Wisdom and Goodness; and that we may as well suppose Men able to change the Nature of things, to turn a Spirit into a Body, or a Body into a Spirit,

Spirit, as that they should be able to alter and unfix those steady Rules, whereby we take our measures concerning Good or Evil. The laws of the invisible, and immaterial World are no less stable and certain than those are by which we observe this visible Frame of things to be guided, in the production of their necessary Effects, and in their stated and constant courses, and periodical Revolutions. 'Tis as unnatural and irrational to say, or make a law that God is not to be worshipped, to affirm that 'tis wickedness and impiety to render to every one their due, or that it is sin and folly to live soberly, righteously and Godly, as it would be for a Man to attempt to make fire and water lose their innate Qualities of heat and coldness, by commanding them to do so; and that they should mutually change their Properties, that Fire should become naturally cold, and Water hot, whenever a company of Men in Authority, should pretend to establish the Absurdity by a Law. This would be as impossible and impracticable too, as that the Sun should rise in the West, and take a contrary Course to what it hath done from the beginning of the World, when the Grand *Supreme* pleases to command it, who, as I think, amongst his other magnificent Titles, styles himself Lord of the Sun and Moon.

But farther, if there be any Advantage on either side, the Laws of Reason and of the intellectual World may fairly challenge it: for as God can never cease to be Holy, Wise and Good, and was so from all Eternity, so these Emanations of eternal Wisdom and Reason, can never, no nor for a moment, cease to be what they are: whereas the material and visible World, having not been from Eternity, but created:

in time by God, the laws by which he governs it are changeable at his Will, and he can suspend the Execution of them when he pleases. So he once

^a Josh. 10. 12.

made the ^a Sun to stand still upon an extraordinary Occasion, and restrained the violent Flames and intense Heat of the burning fiery Furnace, that it should

Dan. c. 3.

have no power to hurt the ^b Three Children who were thrown into it. But tho' we read of Gods altering the Course of Nature, and of his suspending the Laws whereby this material World is acted and

govern'd, by virtue of his Supreme Dominion and Prerogative, which are essential to him as Lord and

Creator of all things beside Himself, yet we nowhere read, that he ever either commanded or allowed any Man to do a moral Evil; to Steal, commit Murder or Adultery; to Worship any other Gods

beside Himself, or to Blaspheme and take his Holy Name in vain. &c. For tho' God commanded *Abraham*

Gen. 22.

to sacrifice his Son, yet even then he did not tempt him to sin; but only made Trial of the sincerity of his Faith and Obedience: and chose to show

an extraordinary Instance of his Providence, by sending an Angel to stay his Hands, which were ready to give the Fatal stroke, rather than suffer him to

imbue them in his own Blood, by shedding that of his innocent and only Son.

Exod. 3. 22.

And although we read that God allow'd the ^a *Israelites*, at their departure out of *Egypt*, to spoil the *Egyptians*, by giving them so much favour

Exod. 3. 22.

with their cruel Taskmasters, as to borrow Jewels of Silver and Jewels of Gold and Raiment of them, without paying them again; yet neither in this Instance, can we charge God as the Patron of Sin.

For he being absolute Lord and Proprietor of all the World,

World, can transfer one mans Right to another when he pleases; but more especially then, when he forfeits it, by rendring himself obnoxious to his Divine Justice and Vengeance, through Oppression, Fraud or Injustice, or any other heinous Crime. But farther, this Action of the *Israelites*, which was approved of by God, may be accounted for after another manner; for the *Egyptians* having oppress'd the *Israelites* for many Years, and defrauded them of their Wages, this Action, at their Departure, was onely a more Subtle way of Paying themselves the Arrears which were due to them, and which they were in no capacity of procuring by Law, or by Compulsion.

Cum Hebræi diu serviissent Egyptiis, multisque ab eis afflicti fuissent injuriis, voluit Deus, eis mercedem servitutis sue & injuriarum rependere. Id etiam notavit Autor libri Sapientie Cap. 10. v. 17. reddens factis mercedem sanctorum laborum suorum deducit eos via mirabili &c. River, in Cap. 12. Exod. To the same purpose, Tremæus c. 49. l. 4.

Legè Naturæ, quæ ex ipsa deminuti naturæ ac vi sequitur, dactiliter fit alienatio, expletione juris & successione. Expletione Juris fit alienatio, quælibet id quod meum accedendum est, sed mihi dari debet, aut loco rei meæ, aut mihi debita, cum rem ipsam consequi non possum, aliud tantundem valens accipio, ab eo qui rem meam detinet, vel mihi debet. Nam Justitia expletrix in quoties ad idem non potest pertingere fertur ad tantundem, quod ex merali estimatione idem. Grot. de Jure Belli & Pac. Lib. 2. c. 7. V. Annot. §. 2.

As to another Objection taken from the 2^d Book of *Sam. 12.* and the 8th, which seems to encourage Incest, or Adultery, because it is said that God gave to *David* his Masters Wives into his Bosom: Some say the *Hebrew* Word doth not imply *Sau's* Wives, but the Maids of Honour or Attendants on the Court of *Saul*, out of which *David* might choose Wives; for as the Learned Author of the Letter to a Deist writes, it will be no else matter, by the Constitution of the *Mosaicall* Law to prove Polygamy to be Adultery, tho' it be unlawfull now by the Law of Christ.

viz. Cethura & Hagar, & Vasa Abrahæ & Concupiscentia sunt amplius, August. de Civitat. Dei. l. 16. c. 34. v. Gen. 16. c. 25. l. compared with 16. Mat. 5. 32. 1 Cor. 7. 4.

So that Men can never act these, and such like Wickednesses by pretending Gods Authority, when they have it not: Because it cannot be that God should either command, or allow them to doe a Moral evil: for if he should, he must then be both Holy and Unholy too, to affirm which is not onely big with Contradiction, but full of Blasphemy and Impiety. Thus as God neither can, nor will deny Himself, so neither can he nor will he, be the Author of any sin, or the Patron of any wickedness, because that would be to deny Himself, and to impeach his own Goodness, and Wisdom, and Veracity, of falsehood, and folly and weakness: which Imperfections are altogether repugnant to the Essential Holiness of his Divine Nature.

If then the Distinction between good and evil be real, and not barely notional, and the Foundation upon which that Distinction is built, be so firm and steadfast, that it implys a Contradiction that it should be altered and removed by God himself, it is beyond the force of any Human power to break the Golden chain of Virtues, by which they are linked together, and to cancel the laws of Piety, Justice and Equity, which are of eternal and immutable Obligation. For indeed, as I hinted before, if the nature of Good and Evil depended upon the capricious humours, and was to be determined by the fallible Constitutions of human Lawgivers, it would then be in their Power to reverse the Face of things, when they pleas'd, and so in time they might quite abolish the Notions and Sentiments which are implanted in Mens minds concerning Right and Wrong, Virtue and Vice: and the same Actions might pass for Just and Pious at one time, which would be look'd upon to be highly Impious and Unjust at another.

*Si populum
iustis, si princi-
pum decretis, si
sententis Judi-
cum, Fur a con-
stituerentur: Jus
esse latrocinari-
Jus adulterare,
Jus testamenta
falsa supponere,
si hoc suffragis,
et scitis multi-
tudo proba-
rentur, atque nos
legem bonam a
mala nulla alia
nisi naturali nor-
ma dividere pos-
sumus, Cicero
de Legib. l. 1.*

another. But this can never be, for if all the World should conspire together to make it unlawfull to worship God, and to honour our Parents; to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly: and should consent to establish a Law to make it lawfull to commit Theft, Murder, or Adultery, &c. it would be null and void of it self, without being formally repeal'd by another, and the same breath that pronounce'd it, would only deliver it up to the sport and derision of the winds: and they who endeavour to establish iniquity by such a Law, would only render themselves guilty before God, by keeping it, and would pull down upon their own Heads that Curse denounc'd against them by the Prophet *Isaiah* c. 5. v. 20 *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.*

'Tis the peculiar Excellence of God that he changeth not, and therefore he will never reſix thoſe Laws in any time which he had decreed and eſtabliſh'd before the World began: for being infinitely Wiſe, and Juſt and Good, he could not enact any Law which was either fooliſh, unjuſt, or wicked: becauſe his Knowledge, which is ſtinted by no other bounds than thoſe of Infinity and Eternity, cannot be deceiv'd, and his Juſtice which is as eſſential to him as his very Being, would not have ſuffer'd it, and his Goodneſs, which overſpreads the whole Creation, could have took no delight and ſatiſfaction in impoſing falſe notions upon his Creatures, or in the reflection, and contemplation upon an Irregular Action in himſelf, of which he is not capable. No, he ſaw all things that He
 • had

• Gen. 1. 31. • *had made and behold they were very Good; as well in a Moral, as in a Natural respect: so that there was nothing left for the wit of Man to perform towards the Perfection of his own Nature; or the accomplishment of his own Happiness, Peace, and Security even in this World: God having made such ample Provision for him, and plac'd him in such a state of Perfection, that he might not only have been Happy himself; but also have deriv'd those Endowments with which he was blest, and that Felicity which he enjoy'd, upon his Posterity too, if he had not swery'd and deviated from the Law of his Creation, in first willfully violating, that of his Maker. For Men therefore to talk of the state of Nature's being a state of War, wherein all things were Lawfull, and all things Common; wherein Men were obliged by no Rules and Laws of Justice and Equity; but that they might, without controul, follow the swing and bent of their own Vicious Inclinations and Irregular Appetites, till by consent they tied themselves up to be govern'd by certain Laws, is to reflect unworthily upon the Wisdom and Goodness of God, as if Men could do better for themselves, than either he could, or would do for them. Alas! the utmost we can do, cannot restore our lapsed Nature to its Primitive Integrity; or re-engrave the defaced Characters of Wisdom and Innocence, which were once imprinted on the minds of our first Parents, by the Finger of their all Wise Creator. For God created man upright; but they have sought out many inventions, Eccles. 7. 24*

This then being premis'd and granted, that the nature of Good and Evil is invariable, and that they

they are not the Fortuitous result, and offspring of Arbitrary Power and Will; but that the one is built upon the solid Foundation of Everlasting Truth, and is conformable to the Will of God; and that the other is a deviation from the dictates of Right Reason, which is a Ray that proceeds from the Fountain of Light, and an aberration from the Divine Law.

I shall now come to a more strict discussion of the Words of my Text. Only be pleas'd to afford your Patience, whilst I make this Reflection upon what I have said: that I am sorry we live in such an Age, wherein the Prime Rules and Fundamental Principles of Religion and Morality are call'd in question; wherein Men affect to be witty at the expence of their own Happiness and Salvation; by endeavouring to vindicate their Enormous Crimes with a shew of Reason, which, God knows, is often as corrupt and vitiated as their Morals; and therefore it cannot but with Regret and Sorrow be reflected upon, that there should be any Occasion for Discourses of this Nature.

Some, alas! in this Degenerate Age, wherein downright *Atheism* is dress'd up in the more plausible Colours of *Deism*, are apt to flatter and deceive themselves with the vain and empty Hopes, of being accounted Men of extraordinary Parts, and piercing Judgments, if they can but manage two or three weak and trifling Arguments against all Revel'd Religion: and so having shook off the Yoke that so sorely gall'd them, they disdain to be under the restraint and government of any other Law than what their Wild Fancies and Corrupt Imaginations

dictate to them: and so giving way to their Head-
 strong Passions, and Craving Appetites, they indulge
 and gratifie their unruly Lusts in all the instances of
 Impiety, Lewdness, and Sensuality. But as sure as
 there is a God that governs the World, so sure hath
 he reveal'd his Will to Mankind, by his onely Son
Jesus Christ, who is the *Wisdom of the Father*,
 and the express Image of his Person; in whom are
 hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge; such
 Knowledge as will make us wise unto Salvation, in
 respect of which all other worldly Wisdom is but
 accounted Folly before God. To offer at the proof
 of this Point would be foreign to my Purpose: and
 therefore I return to the Handling the Words of my
 Text, which in the several Translations of the vul-
 gar *Latin*, *Greek* and *Arabick*, are so variously ren-
 dered, that they differ as much among themselves as
 they do from the Original *Hebrew*: to which our
 Translation, especially taking in the Marginal Read-
 ing of *more abundant*, comes nearer than any of
 those before mentioned, and therefore I shall stick
 to that, and take the Words as they fairly lye be-
 fore us, without offending some of your Ears with
 the uncouth and uncommon Sounds of *Greek* and
Hebrew Words, which I could not avoid, if I should
 attempt to make a Critical Disquisition about the dif-
 ferent Interpretation of the Original. Having there-
 fore in what I have already said, fixt the Notions of
 Good and Evil upon the solid, and immovable Basis
 of Unerring and Everlasting Truth, which I thought
 necessary to doe, to avoid a *Sceptical* Objection,
viz. That I precariously begg'd the Principles I
 went upon, without offering at any Proof for what
 I de-

I deliver'd : I shall in the following part of my Discourse observe this Method.

First, I shall endeavour to show upon what Account a *Righteous Man* is more Excellent than his Neighbour, who must be suppos'd to be a Bad man; otherwise the Comparison would be put in vain; for a Righteous Man would not be more Excellent than his Neighbour, if he were equally Righteous with him, and therefore the Preheminence that the One obtains above the Other, turns upon this Hinge, that the one is *Righteous*, and the other *Wicked*.

Secondly, I shall propound some Instances, wherein the *Righteous Man* is more Excellent than this his Neighbour.

First, I shall endeavour to show upon what Account a *Righteous Man* is more Excellent than his Neighbour, who is suppos'd to be an Ill Man : who tho' he be Superior to the other in the Outward Conditions of this Life, in having the Advantage of a Nobler Birth, a Larger Estate, and a more Splendid Retinue ; yet if he wants the Qualifications of a Righteous Man ; if he be not Just and Equal in his Dealings with other Men ; if he be not Moderate and Temperate in the Enjoyment of worldly Pleasures, and piously and devoutly Affected towards Religion and the Service of God : a Man of meaner Quality, and more narrow Circumstances, if he be but Righteous, is of a more Excellent Spirit than he, who is not so. Because the Righteous Man more resembles God than the other, who is the great Pattern and

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Exemplar

Exemplar of all that is Good, Sublime and Excellent: and therefore he propounds Himself to our Imitation, and we are commanded to be ^a *Mercifull* because our Heavenly Father is *Mercifull*, and to be ^b *Holy* because he is *Holy*. And by how much the nearer Approaches we make towards God, in our imperfect Essays, and weak Endeavours after Holiness and Righteousness, by so much the more do we ennoble our Natures, and distinguish our selves more from the Plebeian Multitude, by acts of Justice, and Mercy and Piety, in the esteem of the Wisest and Best Men, than by a Numerous Attendance and Glistening Attire, which none but the injudicious Vulgar look upon as the onely distinguishing Badges of Honour, and marks of real Worth. The Heathen Poet could discover the Truth of what I have said, by the Light of Nature, when he express'd his Sentiment in that known Distich,

*Tota licet Veteres exornent undique cetera
Atria, Nobilitas sola est atq; unica Virtus.* Juv. Sat. 8.

That Virtue was the sole and true Nobility: which really raises one Man above another, more than all the external Advantages of Birth or Fortune nakedly considered, without the Forementioned Qualifications of Righteousness and Holiness: but when they are joined together, they then illustrate one another, and Virtue is better able to exert it self, and appears more amiable, having the Advantage of a comely Body, and prosperous Condition to support it, and set it off. So true is it what the ^c *H. M^r Boyl* observes, that all that outward Greatness can do,

is

^c Greatness of
Mind promoted
by Christianity
p. 9.

is not to make a Soul Great, but to afford one that is, the opportunity of shewing it self to be so. *Facinus quos inquinat aequat*, that Wickedness which pollutes men makes them equal, tho' their exterior Conditions be vastly different and unequal.

The mind of every Man is truly himself, and by how much that improves in Virtue and usefull Knowledge, by so much doth it excell it self, and those of other Men, which are not imbued with the Rare endowments of Piety, Justice, and Integrity, and an universal Good-will towards all Men. Suppose a man encompass'd with all the external Felicity that this World affords, possess'd of a large estate, and grac'd with Titles of Honour sutable unto it; yet if his Mind be sunk below all that is truly Noble and Generous; if it be overrun and canker'd with the Rust of Covetousness, and sharpened with the Keeness of Revenge; if it be fretted and gall'd with Envy and Malice, and inflam'd with Lust and Intemperance; if it be swoln and bloated with Haughtiness and Pride, and harass'd with wicked Plots, and base Designs; if it be grown so savage as to delight it self in sucking the Blood of the Innocent, and in glutting it self with Cruelty and Oppression: the Righteous Man, tho' he wants some of those unnecessary Superfluities which the other enjoys; but yet exercises himself in the constant Practice of the opposite Virtues: who endeavours to keep a Conscience void of Offence both toward God and toward Man; who is moderate in his Desires and Enjoyments of the Good things of this Life, and kind and beneficent to those whom he is concern'd to assist and relieve; who is
Just

Just in his Dealings, and Faithfull to his Promises; who is humble and obedient to his Superiours, and Governours, civil and obliging to his Equals, and Courteous and Condescending to those that are below him: who endeavours to relieve the Oppressed, and to rescue the Innocent from the Snares of the cruel Hunter, this Man is more Excellent than the other: he will find favour with God, and be highly esteemed by all Good Men, he will be comforted and delighted with the continual Applause of a good Conscience, and with the Joys of a serene and cheerful Mind. This Man is a true Subject of the Kingdom of God, which according to the *Apostle* consisteth *not in Meat and Drink*, in the outward affluence of Riches and Honour, but *in Righteousness and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost*: for he that in these things *serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of Men*. Whilst the other, who is not endowed with the Heavenly Virtues before mentioned, will be slighted and contemn'd, and onely reverenc'd out of Fear, if he happen to be Great and Powerfull: for he being a Friend to no man, none will be a Friend to him, in vindicating his Reputation, by endeavouring to wipe off the Blots, and Stains with which his Name is cover'd, by a mollifying and candid Interpretation of his Actions.

2^d. *The Righteous Man is more Excellent than his Neighbour*, because he is not only respected by Men; but likewise honoured by God himself, who *1 Sam. 2. 30.* has declar'd that they who *honour him he will* *Prov. 15. 5.* honour; and that he being Righteous *1 Pet. 1. 7.* loveth Righteousness in us, and that his eyes will behold the

the Just with Complacency and Delight. Now there is nothing wherein we can honour God so much, as by endeavouring to imitate the Holiness, and other Attributes of his Divine Nature; wherein they are imitable by us: and by doing our best endeavour to transcribe that Copy which he has set us, of doing Justice and loving Mercy, of being kind and charitable to all Men, even to the Ungratefull, and of diffusing our good will to those whom our Bounty cannot reach. We never read that God has commanded us to be *Omniscient* or *Omnipotent*; because the Attainment of these Sublime Excellencies, and peculiar Perfections of the *God-head*, is plac'd beyond the Sphere and Capacity of our weak and finite Natures and Abilities. But, as if we had a sort of Infinity ascrib'd to us in this respect, God has commanded us to be Mercifull and Holy, as he is so, *i. e.* according to the measure and proportion of our stinted Capacity, and our frail and lapsed Condition. Which we cannot be without first being Just, and Upright in Heart: because Justice is a Virtue of the First Magnitude, and is of so comprehensive a Nature, as that it is said to contain all other Virtues in its Fruitfull Womb. For indeed the love of God, and of our Neighbour, which, as we are assur'd by an Infallible Author, is the sum and substance of the whole Law, is the Natural Result and Proper Effect of a Justice and Gratitude. For how can we absolve our selves from the nonperformance of these Duties, without being highly Unjust and Ungratefull? If after having been obliged by God, in so Extraordinary a manner, in his giving us a being,

Primum Justitiae officium est Deum cognoscere ut parentem, cuiusque metuere ut Dominum, diligere ut patrem. Secundum Justitiae officium est hominem agnoscere velut fratrem. Lactant. Epit. p. 685.
and
Ed. Oxon.

and providing a comfortable substance for us in this World, and in taking care for our Future Happiness, we should refuse to pay him the inconsiderable Tribute and Homage of our Love and Service, no Name of Reproach can be bad enough for us, except it be those of being Unjust and Ungratefull. And as Men are not self-sufficient, or able to make themselves Happy like God, in contemplating and reflecting upon their own Perfections; and so wanting the help of others, are naturally inclin'd to Society, from which they expect Relief and Comfort in all their Troubles and Necessities, so can *They* by no means escape the Imputation of Injustice who do not lend a mutual assistance to others in their Afflictions and Calamities, from whom they themselves expected, and perhaps received Kindness and Benevolence when they labour'd under the same or such like Inconveniences or Disasters. For to that end were they born, and not for themselves alone, according to that wise saying of *Tully*: of all those things which are disputed on by Learned Men, there is nothing better than plainly to understand, that we are born to do Justice; and that Right is the Constitution of Nature, and not of Opinion. Hence it is that the Law^b of doing to others as we would they should do unto us again, has obtain'd so much credit in the World; that tho' the practice of it be often neglected; yet it is every where, and by all Men commended to be most Just and Reasonable; being taken in a right sense with some Restrictions and Limitations: as that our Will must be suppos'd to be Regular, and to desire nothing of

^a *Omnium, quæ in doctorem hominum disputatione versantur, nihil est profectus præstabilius, quam plane intelligi nos ad Justitiam esse natos, Neque opinione, sed natura constitutum esse.* *Fin.* M. Tull. lib. 1. de leg. p. 326. Ed. Lamb.

^b *Mat. 7. 12.*

of others, which may infringe the Laws of Equity, Modesty, Decency, and good Manners. For if one should tempt another to Lewdness, and Dishonesty, to be partaker with him or her in Theft or Adultery; and should make use of an Argument grounded upon this Text, that he desires nothing of another but what he should be willing to Gratifie him, or her in again, upon a like occasion, this would be to abuse the Rule before us; which is never so to be understood, as to patronize Sin, or elude the Laws of Justice, and the Precepts of Holiness.

Or, if a *Criminal* standing at the Bar, convicted of some Notorious Crimes, which deserve that the Sentence of Death should be past upon him, should argue thus: That if the Judge was in his case, he would willingly be acquitted, and therefore that he ought not to pass Sentence upon him: because if he does, he violates the Rule of doing to others as he would they should do unto him again: In this Case a Judge ought not to take his Measures from the Irregularity of anothers will, but from the Rules of Justice and Equity, which all Men are universally obliged to observe; tho' not always in their utmost rigour and extent. For we are advised by the wise Man, *not to be righteous over much*: that is, not to stretch things beyond their due measure, and make more of a Circumstance, or an Evidence than they will naturally and fairly bear; but to mix Clemency and Mercy with our Justice, and that where Right and Property,

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Peace

Eccles 7. 16.

Ὁ δὲ εἰς γὰρ ἡ *Peace and Safety, and the Publick Good, can be*
 καλὰ καὶ ἀ- *preserv'd, and secur'd without inflicting Punishment,*
 δικόντας. ὡς *then to prefer Mercy before Justice, because it*
 τότε τὸν ἐν *is the Attribute of God we most Admire and A-*
 ἵκων, καὶ τὴν *dore and which is said so. Rejoyce, or Triumph o-*
 ἔνικα. ὅτι ἡ δὲ *ver Justice, or against Judgement.*
 κησιν, ὅς τις μὴ
 ὁσπερ θεοὺς ἀ-
 λογίστως τιμω-
 ρεῖται.

Οὗτοί μὲν λόγους ἐχόντων καλῶς ἐν τῇ παρατηρηθείσῃ ἐνίκη ἀδικημάτων
 τιμωρεῖται (ὅτι ὅτι τὸν πολεμὸν ἀγνώσκον δέει) ἀλλὰ τὸ μέλλοντος χάριν, ἵ-
 να μὴ αὐτοὺς ἀδικῶν μὴτ' αὐτοὺς ἐπ' ὅτι μὴτ' αὐτοὺς ὁ αὐτὸς ἰδὼν καλῶς ἔχει.
 Platon. Prot. p. 225. Ed. Masl. Ficin. Jam. 2. 13.

I come now to propound some instances, where
 in a Righteous Man excels his Neighbour.

First, If he be a Person who is entrusted with
 Rule and Authority, and the Administration of Ju-
 stice: if he be Advanc'd to some Eminent Station
 either in Church or State, He prefers the Publick
 Good before his own Private Interest. He aims
 not at carrying on any base Designs of ensla-
 ving his Country to a Forreign Power, and Papal
 Jurisdiction: whose Arbitrary Exactions and Impo-
 sitions have been so Intolerable, that they have
 been often oppos'd, and at last cast off, even whilst
 the Nation profess'd the Roman Religion. He chu-
 ses to stand up in Vindication of the Just Rights,
 and Legal Properties of Millions of People, as
 much as he can, without resisting Lawfull Authori-
 ty, rather than suffer the Wise and Ancient Laws
 of his Country, the Freedom and Liberty of his
 fellow Subjects, and the True Religion establish'd
 amongst us, to become a Sacrifice and Prey to the
 layveterate Rage, or insatiable Ambition of a few
 Aspi-

Aspiring and Merciless Men. He cannot be persuaded that the Numerous Race of Mankind were created, on purpose, to be trampled upon by some *Nero's* and *Caligula's*, who are not contented with the Preheminence and Authority which the Laws of God, and the Land whereof they are Governours, have Invested and Impower'd them withall: or that it is Reasonable to think that God has given them leave, at their Pleasure, to divert their Cruel Minds, with exercising the Patience and Fortitude of Innocent Men, with Racks and Gibbets, and other Torments. No, as they have no Commission or Authority to do Evil: so the Min I am speaking of, looks upon himself in Conscience obliged, as much as in him fairly lies, to endeavour to repress the Exorbitant Growth of Arbitrary Power; to stem the Tide of Tyranny, Superstition, and Idolatry, when it begins to overflow the Land, and its Furious Waves attempt to undermine, and bear down the True establish'd Religion he Professes, which is dearer to him than his Life, or any Temporal Concern. For he thinks there is no just Reason to expect, that God should work Miracles to preserve a Church and Nation from Ruin and Destruction, when other Means may be Lawfully us'd, toward the Resetting them upon their old Foundations, according to their Ancient and Legal Constitution, without their being concern'd in Rebellion.

And here I have a Fair Occasion offer'd me, of drawing a Parallel between two Princes, who are at open Hostility with one another; and of show-

ing the Justice of the Cause, in which One of them is Engaged, against the Unjust Invasions, and Violent Uturpations of the Other. Whose Severe, not to say Inhuman Usage of his own Faithfull and Loyal Subjects, many of whom had obliged him in the Highest Degree (and never disoblighd him, except when they could not comply with his Unlawful Commands) may teach us how he would deal with those of another Nation, if they once should be so Unhappy as to Groan under his Heavy Yoke. How would they then wish, and sigh for that *Deliverer* which too many now so lightly Esteem. If Solemn Oaths and *Edicts* could not bind him, from Banishing his own Native Subjects from their Habitations, to seek their Bread in Foreign Countreys because they neither could, nor would be *Papists*; how can we, who of late, have been the Greatest Thorn in his Side, by endeavouring to stop the Progress of his Arms, and curb his Growing Power; who, no doubt, have exasperated him against us, in a more than Ordinary Manner, by Burning and Sinking some of his *Capital Ships*; can we, I say, whom he looks upon as the most Formidable Opposers of his Designs, expect Better and more Favourable Dealings from him, than they have met with? Can we think we have obliged him as much, as his own *Protestant Subjects* have done, who set the Crown upon his Head? And all the World sees how he has Requited them for it. It seems to me to proceed either from want of due Consideration, or a right Understanding of Affairs, to think that a

Monarch

Monarch so much devoted to his own Interest, should be at this Vast Expence of Money, and Loss of Men, barely upon the account, of only Reaping the Naked Glory, of Restoring an Unfortunate *Deserting*, and *Deserted Prince*: without having any farther Design. According to my shallow Judgement in these Matters, I am apt to think he had rather be a Conquerour of a Kingdom himself, than Restore another to it. Can we imagine he should be touch'd with such a feeling Sense of Honour or Conscience, as to impoverish his Subjects, and weaken his Forces for the Sake of Re-enthroning one Prince, when he shows no Concern or Tenderness of either, in Dispossessing others, being of his own Religion too, of their Lawfull, and Hereditary Dominions? Why should not the Duke of *Savoy*, the *Electors Palatine*, the *Emperour*, or King of *Spain*, be as Dear to him as some Body else? And yet I am inclin'd to believe, if he had his Will against the foremention'd Princes, he would leave the Glory of Restoring them to their Dominions to some other Potentate. So that I must beg to be excus'd, if I cannot submit to the Judgement of those Men, who have so good an Opinion of him, as to think he only Designs to do Justice, out of Pure Generosity, by Restoring the late King. And therefore I hope without being Guilty of misapplying my Text, or abusing Scripture, I may truly say that our Gracious, and Righteous King *William* is more Excellent than This his Neighbouring Prince.

'It cannot but be Evident, to a Man of an un-
 bias'd Judgement, that our King seeks to Pro-
 mote the Publick Good; not only of these King-
 doms, but of all *Europe*. If he could have been
 so *Base* as to have Betray'd the Liberty of his
 Country; or so *Tame* as only to have sat still
 whilst the *French* had overrun and subdu'd it, he
 might have made what Terms he pleas'd for him-
 self, and have enjoy'd more Ease and Quiet than
 he now does. But the Safety and Welfare of
 his Country, of which he has been an Hereditary
 Defender, the Liberty of all *Europe*, and the Pre-
 servation of the Protestant Religion, were Dearer
 to him than his own Private Interest and Repose:
 otherwise he would never have undertook so Ha-
 zardous an Attempt, as was that of his coming
 hither, to Secure and Settle the Right of his
Princess to the Crown, by making his Appeal to
 a Free *Parliament*, and to put our disjointed Go-
 vernment into Form and Order again, without
 any imaginable Probability, that He should come
 to fill an *Empty Throne*. His Actions since his
 being Possess'd of these Kingdoms, sufficiently ma-
 nifest it to all the World, that 'twas neither Pride
 nor Ambition, nor love of Ease and Empire, that
 prompted him to undertake our Deliverance, and
 Accept the Crown. For since that, has he not
 expos'd his Life to Danger, as much or more
 than ever he had done before? Has he not un-
 dergone the Greatest Fatigues imaginable, in Watch-
 ings and Tedious Marches, and liv'd in a conti-
 nual hurry of Business ever since? Men who
 only

only Design their own Profit and Advantage, give over Trading when they have acquir'd a Plentiful Estate; that they may Enjoy themselves in Ease, and Pleasure, and Quiet. They then Retire from the Noisy Clutter of the City and Exchange, and take some satisfaction in thinking how others scramble for that, of which they have now, with Care and Industry got enough; but the Acquisition of Three Kingdoms does only Inspire and Invigorate our *King* for Greater Undertakings; that, by the help of God, he might be the Deliverer of other *Nations*, as well as of these *Kingdoms*: For it is plain he does not so much Delight to wear a Crown as to Deserve it. Whilst others spend their flying, and Precious Hours amidst all the Softening Divertisements, and Entertainments of a Splendid Court; He chuses to tread the Rugged, but more Noble Paths, which lead to True Glory and Immortal Honour: in shunning no Opportunity of setting a Gallant Army a Brave Example of Heroick Courage, and Undaunted Magnanimity, of Prudent Conduct, and Inimitable Valour, by too much Exposing his Sacred Person to the Common Danger upon all Occasions. And notwithstanding He has never declin'd to Engage the Enemy, upon Apparent Disadvantage, and Unequal Number, yet the Watchfull Providence of God has Protected and Defended Him in a more than Ordinary Manner. When so many Instruments of Death have flown so Thick about Him, that some of them have gently wounded Him; yet

none.

none of them have had Power to touch his Life, for which extraordinary Mercy Gods holy Name be prais'd.

I could willingly dwell longer upon this copious and delightfull Theme, if the Time would give me leave; but I think enough has been said to convince an unprejudic'd Mind, that both *He* and the *Cause* in which he is engag'd are Righteous: and if so, it nearly concerns every True *Englishman* and *Protestant* of the Church of *England* to wish well to it, and to pray to God to prosper it with Good Success; and that this War may end in a firm and lasting Peace, to the Glory of God, and the Preservation and Prosperity of his Church.

I must confess, next under God, I owe my comfortable Subsistence to Him, as I believe a great many more here present do, and therefore I do not onely think my self obliged to be inwardly gratefull and thankfull, for the Ease and Safety, for the Freedom and Liberty of enjoying my Religion, without Disturbance; for the opportunity and pleasure of Study, and improvement in Learning, and all the other Advantages of a Retired and *Academick* Life, which I have already enjoy'd under their *Majesties Auspicious Reign*; but also openly to testifie my Gratitude to others, that they may be excited to an Acknowledgment of their *Obligations* to Him, and may be stirred up to pray that God would continue these Mercies to us, which in all likelihood he will not long do, if we be not Thankfull for those we have already receiv'd.

Secondly,

Secondly, If the Righteous Man I am speaking of, be a Private Person; one who is entrusted with no Power, or Authority in the Administration of Publick Affairs, he will be cautious and wary of being Turbulent, and Factionous against that Government which *protects* him: tho' he may think he finds some Flaws, and observes some Miscarriages in it, or may look upon himself not to be obliged to comply with all its Laws and Injunctions. He will not be over-hasty in Censuring and Condemning others, as if they had neither Reason nor Conscience on their side, tho' he cannot come up to the same Height of Compliance with them. A Man ought to have a care lest he forfeit his Claim to Prudence and Discretion, by abounding too much in his own Sense, and to suspect least his own Judgment misguide him, when it runs *counter* to the Publick Laws, which are establish'd and promulg'd by the Supreme Power, by the Concurrence and Authority of some of the Greatest, and Wisest, and most Religious Men of the Nation: and in Modesty and Charity believe that other Men, from whom he differs in Opinion, act upon Principles of Reason and Conscience as well as himself. So that tho' it does not belong to me to condemn those, who after an impartial Examination of the Arguments on both Sides, are sincerely persuaded in their Consciences, that they cannot Comply with Taking the *Oaths*; for to *their own Master they must stand or fall*, provided they demean themselves modestly and peaceably; who submit to it as far as they can, and do not obstinately set themselves against it: yet I think,

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without

without being guilty of Censoriousness and rash Judging, I may condemn those who are Turbulent, and Factious, and Seditious; especially if they profess themselves to be Members of the Church of *England*; who have all the Reason in the world to stand *Neuters*, at least, if they think themselves obliged not to be *Actors* under This Government. For certainly, however such a Man may think himself obliged to be *Passive* and *Unactive* under This Government, one can scarcely imagin how any one, who wishes well to the *Church* and *Nation*, can let his Humour so far prevail above his Reason, as to think himself bound in Conscience to be *Active* in pulling of it down: because, in all likelyhood, our Religion and Liberties must fall with it. For howsoever he may flatter himself with the Hopes of finding more than ordinary Favour under another Revolution, yet, if he keeps firm to his Religion, he may chance to be deceived: But suppose he be not, but that some distinguishing Note of Honour, or Preferment be conferr'd upon him, for Adhering so stedfastly to the late *K.* yet, after all, he must be an Unnatural Son, who can rejoyce, and take Satisfaction in his Own, and a Few others Safety and Advancement, whilst he beholds his *Mother* the Church of *England* depress'd and torn in pieces.

Thirdly, The Righteous Man who has sworn Fidelity to their Present *Majesties*, thinks himself in Conscience obliged to observe his Oath; because he took it in Sincerity and Truth, and in the Integrity

tegrity of his Heart. He did not with him mentioned in the *Tragædian*, keep his Mind unsworn whilest he swore with his Tongue: but he then acted the part of an honest Man in Taking the Oath, as he now does in Making his Words and Actions sutable, and conformable to what he then did. He cannot but wonder at the Indiscretion, and Inconsistency, as well as sinfull Folly of those, who having taken the Oath to *K. W. and Q. M.* are still as much Enemies to the Present Government as if they had not; and bespatter it with more odious Reflections, and sly Insinuations than some Others, who have not Sworn: this is so open, and palpable a piece of Hypocrisie, and such plain and downright Dissimulation, that certainly those Men who are Conscious to themselves of being Guilty this way, can never, at the same time, be so vain as to entertain any hopes of being Recorded in History, for Men of Fidelity, Integrity and Honour.

For whilest they think to save Themselves, by Trimming on both Sides; and to gain the Reputation of prudent and wary Men, they really loose the good Esteem of both Parties; neither of which will think it safe to trust them with any Secret of Moment, or Business of Concern, for fear of being Betray'd. So that, in my Judgment, they have as little Reason as any to hope for Advancement, and a Favourable Reception, if the Face of Affairs, and the Scene of Government should change again.

To be firm and steady to a Principle we have
 Espous'd, when there is no apparent Wickedness
 in it, nor any notorious Evil and Inconvenience con-
 sequent upon it, is worthy of Praise and Commen-
 dation. But to appear in one Dress to the World,
 and in another behind the Curtain, is to act the
 part of a *Stage-Player*, and not of a sincere and
 honest Man. Faithfulness and Sincerity in our
 Words and Actions, in our Oaths and Promises,
 in our Bargains and Contracts, are the main Ingre-
 dients that compound a Righteous and Honest
 Man. Thus the Psalmist in the 15th Psalm de-
 scribing a Good Man, who is fixt upon Mount
 Zion, and never shall be moved, introduces his
 Character with this Question, *Lord who shall abide*
in thy Tabernacle? who shall rest in thy Holy Hill?
 to which he thus replys, *He that walketh upright-*
ly, and worketh Righteousness, and speaketh the
Truth in his Heart, he that backbiteth nor with his
Tongue, nor doth Evil to his Neighbour, in whose
eyes a Vile Person is contemned, but he honoureth
them that fear the Lord, he that sweareth to his
own hurt and changeth not. But perhaps, some
 may say, this last Verse might have been more
 aptly apply'd to Those, who refuse to comply with
 the Present Government, upon the account of
 Former Oaths, taken to the late K. To which I
 answer with a Bishop Sanderson, who is acknow-
 ledg'd by all to be an Excellent Casuist: That
 the Bond of an Oath is dissolv'd, when the Mat-
 ter of it ceases, or any notable Change is made
 in the Principal Cause of the Oath: For
 the

*Tunc enim ces-
 sasse materiam
 censendum est
 cum rerum sta-
 tus inter tempus
 jurandi, & tem-
 pus adimplendi ita
 immutatus est,
 ut si quo tempo-
 re jurabatur præ-
 videri potuisset
 is qui postea in-
 secutus est re-
 rum status, non
 omnino juratum
 fuisse. Respon-
 detur breviter,
 cessante juramen-
 ti, voti, aut pro-
 missionis materia
 cessare simul e-
 jusdem & Ob-
 ligationem quæ
 admodum in na-
 turalibus & ar-
 tificialibus, de-
 ficiente materia
 deficere, necesse
 est & actionem
 agentis, nec enim
 potest ignis ure-
 re, si destituta
 materia combusti-
 bilis: nec Faber,
 ni adsint ligna,
 scammum facere.
 de Juram. Ob-
 lig. Præd. 7.
 cas. 60.*

the Matter is to be thought to cease, when the State of things between the Time of Swearing, and the Time of Fulfilling, is so chang'd, that if that state of Affairs which afterwards follow'd, could have been foreseen by him that Swore, he would not have Sworn at all. In short he answers thus: That the Matter of an Oath, or Vow, or Promise ceasing, the *Obligation* to them does likewise cease; as in Natural and Artificial things, the Matter being Deficient, there is a Necessity that the Action of the Agent should likewise cease. For Fire cannot burn, if there be no Combustible matter; nor a Carpenter make a Scaffold if he has no Wood.

To conclude, the Righteous Man in this respect also excelleth his Neighbour, because he prayeth for the Peace and Prosperity of *Jerusalem*; that is, for the Safety and Welfare of the *Church* and *Nation* whereof he is a Member, and does not rejoyce and triumph in the sad Accidents and Disasters, which may happen unto them, and which may tend to their Subversion and Ruin. He looks upon it as a piece of Inhumanity not common amongst the most Unciviliz'd People, to be devoid of all Compassion and Fellow-feeling toward his Countreymen, Confederates, and Fellow-Protestants abroad, when they suffer Afflictions, Losses and Calamities: and therefore cannot but stand amaz'd at the folly of those, who exult with joy at their own Destruction, which must necessarily be involv'd in that of the whole Nation, which God of his infinite Mercy avert. This is as great an Instance of folly

(30)
ly and indiscretion, as if a Man should rejoyce
when his Neighbours house was on Fire, tho his
own stood the next to be devour'd by the ap-
proaching Flames. *O pray for the Peace of our Je-
rusalem, they shall prosper that love her, Peace be
within her Walls and Plenteousness within her Pa-
laces.* What remains then, but that we all as-
pire after those things which are truly Praise-wor-
thy: and endeavour to excell one another in Righ-
teousness and Holiness here, that we may be re-
ceiv'd into the Habitations of Everlasting Bliss and
Glory hereafter. Which God of his infinite Mercy
grant, for *Jesus Christ* his sake. *Amen.*

FINIS.

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